

Charles D'Oyly's Lost Satire of British India

Charles D'Oyly's Lost Satire of British India:

Tom Raw, the Griffin, 1828

Edited by

Hermione de Almeida
and George H. Gilpin

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INTRODUCTION: THE CONTEXTS OF CHARLES D'OYLY'S ART

Sir Charles D'Oyly was a civil servant in early British India from 1797 to 1818. He was born in India, educated in England, and returned to India in 1797 the age of 16. He served as a junior civil officer in Bengal, in the administration of the Governor-Generals Charles Cornwallis and Richard Wellesley, until 1804. D'Oyly was an artist, and he is recognized in art circles as a landscape painter of Indian scenes. His interest in art began early; he studied drawing at school, created portfolios of sketches and comic illustrations during his initial years back in India and, in 1807, took formal training from the resident professional artist and Royal Academician George Chinnery, who became his close friend. Thereafter, with Chinnery's encouragement, D'Oyly focused his time on his artwork and occupied increasingly titular civil administrative posts in Calcutta, Dacca and Bihar. D'Oyly exiled himself from the British establishment in Calcutta in 1818 and moved upcountry to Patna, where he painted and sketched full-time and formed a circle of "outsider," multi-ethnic literary and artistic friends. D'Oyly, who had illustrated with irreverence travel "handbooks" for visitors to India while he was still an administrator in Calcutta, took the lead on the early collaborative work of the Patna group—illustrated satiric narratives, verse skits, and anthropomorphic natural histories. He also purchased one of the new lithographic presses (only the second in Bengal) so as to be able to circulate the unorthodox art and literature of his group without censorship by the British establishment in India.

Tom Raw, the Griffin is D'Oyly's most sustained satiric work. The poem, in twelve cantos with cartoon-style hand-coloured lithographic illustrations, is ostensibly an amusing and harmless mock-heroic narrative of the experiences of a young British cadet in India sent, as Edmund Burke said, "fresh from England . . . to found an empire for Britain." Published in London and Paris by Rudolph Ackermann and dated 1828, the illustrated poem while still in page-proofs was recalled from journal previews in 1827 and, upon publication in bound copy, immediately withdrawn from general circulation and from bookshops in London—*by its publisher*. We may presume that *Tom Raw, the Griffin* was politically too hot to handle in

a nascent but evolving imperial Britain. Unknown and without context from the start, D'Oyly's *Tom Raw, the Griffin* remains a very rare book in hard copy, to be found only in archival holdings of a few research libraries worldwide. Recovered and contextualized here in a new edition with colour plates and supporting material that includes six of the watercoloured drawings that were excluded from the printed poem, *Tom Raw, the Griffin* justifies its significance to contemporary audiences in the literature, art, and history of the nineteenth century—even as it compensates for its suppression and neglect for almost two hundred years.

In the context of its compositional time, D'Oyly's *Tom Raw, the Griffin* is an extraordinarily significant cultural and political document. It was drawn and composed between 1815 and 1824 in a British colonial place during a European period of intellectual ferment, artistic creativity, scientific inquiry, geographic exploration, nation-building (and expansion)—and democratic movements in the Americas as well as Europe. In strictly literary terms, D'Oyly's tongue-in-cheek story of the young cadet's episodic adventures in India finds place at the end of a long European tradition of mocking responses to the heroics of Homer's *Odyssey* best exemplified, perhaps, by Cervantes's *Don Quixote* and mock-heroic poems like Alexander Pope's *The Dunciad*. *Tom Raw* finds artistic place, also, among contemporized and reductively Homeric illustrated narratives of innocents abroad: Robert Bridges' *Homer Travestie* (1762), William Hogarth's *Hudibras* (1763-68), Thomas Rowlandson's and William Combe's *Dr. Syntax* series (1812-21), and, especially, the anonymous *Military Adventures of Johnny Newcome* (1815). Because of its proximity in time and shared antecedents, the closest parallel for *Tom Raw* could be Lord Byron's *Don Juan*, which was published serially between 1819 and 1823. The incongruities inherent in associating an unknown poem by a visual artist with a canonical Romantic literary masterpiece are overt and apparent. But to dismiss unknown or secondary works because they are not known primary works is to create a deficit or outright loss to a given cultural period and a notable lacuna in literary history. In the case of the lost *Tom Raw*, this dismissal also precludes the real opportunity for expanding the borders of an international, more complex and geopolitical, Romanticism.

Tom Raw has primary value in that it is *sui generis* in topic as the first sustained critique of Britain's imperial project written with prescience decades before the formal establishment of the British Raj and the declaration of Queen Victoria as Empress of India in 1872. Because of its singularity as a colonial satire *and* a Romantic work of art, because of its fearless choice of topics for its satire in an age of newly-enacted sedition

laws, because of its insouciant irony and predictive statements on the overall European colonial enterprise, *Tom Raw* justifies its recovery and studied consideration alongside well-known Romantic works. Once it is known for its unusual context among lost literary works of the Revolutionary Era in Europe and placed, specifically, alongside Byron's *Don Juan*, D'Oyly's *Tom Raw* will complicate existing recognition of Byron's achievement—even as it highlights their related cultural and political worldview and their unexpected kinship in literary traditions. In exile in Europe, Byron said that ridicule was the one weapon the British climate could not rust: his last and best cantos for *Don Juan* focused with acuity on the British aristocratic society the he had known too well in London as a popular and titled young poet. D'Oyly also writes best in *Tom Raw* of what he has come to know best: the imperial greed, social pretensions, monument building, and self-importance, in an unknown country, of the new rulers of India bastioned in British Calcutta. D'Oyly also goes on to predict with prescience, like Byron and Byron's favorite historian Gibbon before him, the incipient decay and fall of yet another empire.

Mischievous, gleeful, scathing—and sometime wickedly funny or fiercely earnest—D'Oyly's satiric stance in *Tom Raw* is that of a knowing *inside* outsider in British India. Positioned “at large” outside the British establishment centered in Calcutta and uphill from the city's “white palaces” of government, and with the full knowledge of life and work in Britain's Indian city as Records Secretary to Richard Wellesley and ranked official in the Governor-Generalship of Lord Minto, D'Oyly knew firsthand the experiences of innocents and not-so-innocents in Britain's evolving residential empire. As the son of Sir John Hadley D'Oyly (John Hadley was a confidant of Warren Hastings and his senior advisor in India) during a freewheeling British age of maritime colonial trade in India, D'Oyly heard of and then witnessed the changes in the British presence that occurred in political philosophy, governing practice, and social attitude toward the country and its people *after* Hastings departed from India. Raised and educated in England amid his father's friends from Hastings' circle and William Jones's scholars of the Asiatick Society, but born in India in another hemisphere, living in the Hastings' former house at Alipore in Bengal with his sisters and retired father upon his return to the subcontinent to work at the age of sixteen, D'Oyly was fully between places and consciously alien to both. His satire in *Tom Raw* equivocates and slips between the slapstick and sometimes uncomfortably raw, to a complex and overarching irony for the circumstances that give rise to it. Stereotypes are the stock-in-trade of satirists, and D'Oyly does not spare

his targets as he depicts new and innocent Tom's first encounters of stiff-lipped British officials, over-decorated generals, erudite and otherworldly Indian scholars, aging and sherry-soaked "European" adventurers who have "gone native," middling civil servants with wives feathered in ostrich plumes and plump with new propriety, British horse-traders of dubious origin and more dubious intent, and Indian shills and tricksters eager to enrich themselves and sell their birthright. D'Oyly's illustrative drawings for the poem often depict the clash of cultures with double vision: when Tom fearfully mistakes a French milliner robed in too many scarves for a Hindu goddess, or when he affronts a formally-robed Indian prince for what he thinks is an inappropriate or overly-friendly greeting, we see—in the onlookers' astonishment and horror—manifestations of their respective, stereotypical cultural expectations. British imperial vanity is depicted with swift ridicule: Palladian-style white palaces built by Wellesley in Calcutta, for example, are shown as constructed of composite plaster and wood, not marble, with the showpiece of New Government House shedding chunam (whitewash) and sporting a seemingly crooked and silvered dome; or, from the many statues and monuments commissioned by Wellesley, the much-too-large statue of Charles Cornwallis placed in the basement of Town Hall with its head rearing up into the entrance of the dance-floor above. Moral earnestness can suddenly replace light satire when D'Oyly portrays the profound displacement of new and deeply committed civil servants and their too-well laid (and doomed) plans for ordering an entire sub-continent; or when he portrays the pathos of nameless young men, like Tom, eager for adventure in serving their country, gambling their salaries on the lottery, wounded in opportunist wars in Nepal and the northwest of India, rewarded for their lost limbs with a desk job in British Calcutta or abandoned to die on the battlefield; or when he describes the camp-followers of British military excursions—nameless local militia, Indian sepoys (conscripts), orderlies, and their dependent families—who serve in support of British conquest and in their own imminent displacement. To paraphrase Byron in *Don Juan*, after he has described the Battle of Ismail fought between the imperial powers of Russia and Turkey, D'Oyly and we laugh that we may not weep.

Editors' Note to the Text

Charles D'Oyly's Lost Satire of British India: Tom Raw, the Griffin, 1828 is a fully contextualized edition of D'Oyly's illustrated and satiric, epic poem. It reproduces the poem and its illustrations from the edition of 1828, and it provides an introduction with a contextualizing

discussion of the literary period, the visual art, and the historical milieu of the poem and its author. Thirty-two coloured plates in the centerfold of this book reproduce the twenty-five coloured engravings published with the original 1828 edition, as well as six of the watercoloured drawings for the poem that were withheld from the 1828 volume by D'Oyly's publisher. The centerfold also reproduces a representative image from mid nineteenth-century popular Kalighat art.

D'Oyly provides notes and glosses of words for each canto of *Tom Raw, the Griffin*—in the manner of eighteenth-century textual annotations and marginalia. These notes, at once informative, ironic—and occasionally ribald—are integral to the poem as a whole and its nuanced, satiric intention. D'Oyly's notes to his text also include his tongue-in-cheek translations of phrases from a pidgin language of colloquial Indian dialects that he calls “Anglicè,” and of the imperative but comic adaptations of “Anglicè” that the British in Calcutta used when addressing local inhabitants.

All of the artwork reproduced in this book is in the public domain. We are grateful to the Beineke Library of Yale University and the Yale Center for British Art for providing a high resolution digital copy of D'Oyly's published 1828 poem, and its coloured illustrative artwork, for reproduction in our book. We are also grateful to the Horace Walpole Library, the Library of Congress, and the British Library for access to their collections. In our citations from the poem, we have simplified D'Oyly's original numbering system for the cantos and stanzas: *Canto the First*, Roman I to LVIII, etc., is changed to the shorter reference of I,1—57, etc. To avoid confusion, we have maintained D'Oyly's traditional designations for place names in India. Page numbers for this edition are located at the bottom center of each page to accommodate the pagination of the original edition and its plate interleavings.

D'Oyly's Life and Art: The Social and Political Contexts

Charles D'Oyly, the author and illustrator of the mock-epic poem *Tom Raw, the Griffin* (1828) was born in 1781 in Mushidabad, India, as the eldest son of Sir John Hadley D'Oyly, the 6th Baronet of a sixteenth-century Norfolk estate, and Diana Cotes Rochfort of Clontarf, Ireland. John Hadley, who arrived in Bengal in 1769 as a Writer and Persian translator, was a senior trading representative of the East India Company, and Commercial Resident at the court of the Nawab of Bengal, Mubarak ud-Daulah, at the time of Charles's birth. Sir John was also an advisor to the government of Warren Hastings, the Company's Governor-General of

the Presidencies of Calcutta, Madras, and Bombay. He was, as well, a founding member of William Jones's Asiatick Society, a friend of King George III, and a close friend of Warren and Marian Hastings. Charles was a godson of Marian Hastings.¹ The D'Oyly family left India in 1785 after Warren Hastings resigned the Governorship in protest of the India Act of 1784 that set in motion the new Prime Minister William Pitt's imperial plan for an occupied and fully established "British" India. Hastings returned to London where he was treated as a political foe and proto-secessionist (like George Washington) by Parliamentary leaders; he was impeached in a trial that lasted from 1787 to 1794, as part of the propaganda for Pitt's evolving policy for territorial conquest and the establishment of a global empire. Charles Cornwallis, the British army veteran of the American wars (and the defeated general of the Battle of Yorktown) was sent in 1786 to replace Hastings and begin the transformation of Britain in India from an East India Company trading entity supported by the English Navy, as it had been for decades, into an occupied territory governed by appointees of Parliament and maintained by a now substantial, standing British Army. Cornwallis announced at his inaugural celebration (a three-day shock and awe extravaganza that included military parades, cannon salutes, fighting elephants, fireworks, formal balls, and costume dances for Calcutta dignitaries) that this new British India was to be the first jewel in Britain's crown.

Once back in England the D'Oyly family settled in Hampshire where Sir John Hadley served as the Member of Parliament from Ipswich for an initial term. His refusal in 1794 to join the Parliamentary vote of thanks to the "managers" of Hastings' impeachment left Sir John with few friends in power. Charles D'Oyly was tutored at home and then attended private school. The return to England had not been easy for Sir John; he missed the cultural camaraderie and shared values—as well as the lucrative business engagement—that he had experienced during his residence in India. Charles D'Oyly, at age 16, returned to India in 1797 as planned, to join the civil service of Bengal; his widowed father and two sisters joined him in 1802, while his younger brother John stayed with the Hastings in England to finish school. The D'Oylys resided in Hastings' former country house at Alipore near the old Portuguese trading base, on an inlet of the Hoogly River called Tolly's Nullah just below Calcutta. D'Oyly's father, because of his loyalties, found no place amid the rising political regime in British Calcutta, but he was allowed to be an unofficial liaison to his old friend, the now much diminished in power and land Nawab of Bengal. In an ongoing correspondence, Charles sought political advice from Warren Hastings on the changing politics of civil service in

India; as Charles grew increasingly concerned about his role in the civil government of Britain's India, Hastings advised him to look for service and fulfillment in the country outside Calcutta, and to find topical inspiration for his nascent artistic talents in the Bengal countryside. Charles sent sketches of local scenes in his letters to the Hastings, and they soon encouraged him to take lessons from George Chinnery, the Royal Academician who was still painting in India.

The D'Oyly children experienced an India that was distinct and different from the country of the 1770s and 1780s that their parents had known and described to them. The 1784 India Act was the first of a succession of India Acts of the 1790s that gave the language and the full means to Pitt's conception of a *British* India. Parliamentary authority confirmed the India could no longer be just a location for maritime commerce managed by English traders of the East India Company (in association with European traders of the original Dutch company)—it had to be a distinctly British, residential, centrally controlled territory ruled by the Crown. Warren Hastings' government in India (1772 to 1785) had been one of laissez-faire colonial management: lucrative for the Company and associated European traders but based on cultural and social engagement that encouraged an easy exchange with local economies. Company administrators and Indian rulers (or their agents) could be allies, not foes, sharing common economic goals. To this end, Hastings' administration established cooperative policies that were in keeping with the traditions and practices of the hereditary rulers of India: his government incorporated Indian civil laws and revenue-collection patterns, with Indian judges employed at all levels for any disputes; English Company agents were expected to be multi-lingual and culturally engaged; and European traders with continuing ties to the Company could partner privately with their Indian counterparts as long as this advanced peaceful economic cooperation between the principal countries.² William Jones's Asiatick Society, formally founded in 1784 with Hastings' prior and continuing support, with its goal of preserving India's linguistic and cultural heritage, was conceived as a dynamic Society or Fellowship based on Enlightenment principles that would further the commercial alliance and cultural exchange between India and England. But good government, like good intentions, proved to be all-too-transient.

Governor-General Charles Cornwallis, appointed to ensure that Hastings' contented group in India did not secede from the nation as the Americans had just a decade before, was the perfect person to husband the will and policies of Pitt's India Acts—to undo Hastings' revolutionary intentions (and, sometimes, achievements) in India, to replace policies of

popular, prosperous management and good will with the circumstances and pomp of new but coldly indifferent governing power—and thereby fashion a *British* India that was disturbingly unrecognizable to men like John Hadley D'Oyly. Cornwallis used the 1787 India Act of Regulation to abolish the prevailing “irregular” use of Indian intermediaries in the collection of land revenues and “protection” levies, and to discourage direct contact by non-British agents with rulers of Indian principalities; he declared that civil service in the government would be greatly expanded but confined to British nationals, and that current Indian civil servants in Bengal would be demoted, dismissed, and thereafter allowed to earn no more than one half of one rupee per month for any job in the new government; he ostracized long-serving trading representatives of the Company as too “Indianized” to represent British values and prohibited their private trade activities in Calcutta, Madras, and Bombay.

Frugal, determinedly middle-class and hardly fun-loving in his personal life, Cornwallis nevertheless believed in the power of extravagant ceremonial display and constant military presence to intimidate and establish distance between Britain's rulers of India and those they ruled. He had read his histories of imperial Rome and learned that the social patterns of fraternizing and interpersonal engagements practiced and encouraged by Hastings' government were anathema in the new British India. Soon, long-standing diplomatic and marital alliances between high-ranking Company officials and ruling Indian families were made politically and socially unacceptable; British troops and petty officers who had entered into inter-racial marriages lost their commissions and were ostracized. Former Company heroes in well-known interracial marriages (like Sir David Ochterlony, the former ambassador to the Moghul Court in Delhi, who was married to thirteen Indian princesses) were encouraged to move with their “immoral liaisons” and half-breed children to the provincial outskirts of Calcutta. The policy instituted by Hastings of providing an allowance to Company cadets and foot soldiers for every child conceived and born to them and their Indian wives—so as to encourage the establishment of a racially mixed younger generation loyal to both countries—was now inconceivable.

William Pitt's culminating Permanent Settlement Act of 1793 coincided with Cornwallis' dismemberment of the Kingdom of Mysore. The Act provided legal and political justification for the acquisition of other princely states in central India and, finally, the Moghul throne in Delhi. The Act authorized an extensive conscription of foot soldiers to meet imperial needs. The Act also established centralized British control over all Indian revenues—of military “protection” levies and tribute

money from the princely states, and of agricultural land taxes now set as fixed sums per area size regardless of soil variety or climate vagaries. Absentee landlords with overseers and extortionist money-lenders soon flourished across India by Parliamentary sanction, undermining the agricultural rhythms and social fabric of all territory now owned by Britain. But, the Crown coffers at home grew with monies and manpower needed for imperial conquests in northern India and southeast Asia—and for imminent wars with Napoleonic France in Europe and in northeast Africa. The changes to the world's territorial map would be cataclysmic. James Gillray's shocking political caricature, *The Plumb-Pudding in Danger—or State Epicures Taking un Petit Souper* (1805) [Fig. 1], which depicted Prime Minister Pitt and Napoleon Bonaparte seated at table with the “insatiable appetites” of gluttony, carving up (or plumbing the depths of) the “great globe of the world,” sums up what would indeed transpire by 1805 in India and contiguous regions—with the help of Richard and Arthur Wellesley.



Figure 1. James Gillray, *The Plumb-Pudding in Danger;—or—State Epicures Taking un Petit Souper*, 1805.

Lord Mornington Richard Colley Wellesley, the regal replacement to Cornwallis, arrived in Calcutta in 1798. As the new Governor-General of Britain in India, he was the hand-picked choice of Prime Minister Pitt

and his friend Henry Dundas, the former head of the Company's Board and now Pitt's Secretary of State for War. Wellesley had been vetted and coached by the two friends on their imperial plans for Britain abroad, and his appointment by Parliament was carefully orchestrated to articulate and garner support for their plans. The seventeen-year-old Charles D'Oyly, a junior civil officer, found himself in Wellesley's entourage as one of several young and aristocratic aides-de-camp serving the Governor-General's private office. His initial duty was to join the honour-guard of twelve aides-de-camp carrying silver batons (or "silver sticks" as D'Oyly later described them) who preceded the Governor-General's arrival at any official function. Richard Wellesley, before leaving for India, had acquired rights to the coat-of-arms of Ulster (from his cousin Fortesque) which depicted two lions rampant and the motto "Fortune is the attendant of virtue": he then hurriedly married Gabrielle-Hyacinthe, his French mistress and mother of his four children, changed his name from "Wesley" to "Wellesley," and urged the same name change on his brothers Arthur and Henry.³ Both brothers had been appointed to Wellesley's cabinet in India: Henry to lead the surveillance and information office, and Arthur (later, the Duke of Wellington) to strategize military operations for the subjugation of the Deccan peninsula. The Battle of Seringapatam against Tipu Sultan of Mysore in 1799 was portrayed by Pitt's propaganda to the home audience as a significant victory for Britain. In fact, the battle was more bloody spectacle than military event: Cornwallis had already dismantled the Mysore Kingdom, seized most of its land and half its treasury, and taken the ruler's two youngest sons hostage. Nevertheless, the Battle was much celebrated at home for the prestige and riches it had brought Britain: a raft of paintings of the "victory" followed, highlighted by Robert Ker Porter's panorama *The Battle of Seringapatam*, (1801, exhibited on the Strand in central London and then sent on tour to the major cities of England) which depicted, among the victorious British figures on the ramparts of Seringapatam, several officers and statesmen who during the battle were safely at home in London.⁴

Seringapatam earned Richard Wellesley the title of Marquess Wellesley. Arthur Wellesley's subsequent campaigns against the Marathas and Rajput principalities adjacent to Mysore and to the north pleased the Home Office and Parliament: he was recognized as a brilliant tactician for search-and-destroy missions and as a detail-driven and ruthless battle strategist able to get the most from his troops even when they were on short rations. Dundas and the War Office in London came to view him as the ideal commander to lead British troops in Europe against the empire of Napoleon. Victory over the French at Vitoria brought Arthur the title of

Duke of Wellington but, well before Vitoria and Waterloo, Arthur Wellesley had earned the nickname (among activists, political cartoonists and graphic artists in London and Manchester) of "The Butcher of India," for his military efficiencies in the Deccan peninsula, and as "Vilainton" or "Wily old Willingdon . . . the best of cut-throats," as Byron described him in Canto IX of *Don Juan*. "Do no ill," the motto of the D'Oyly family coat-of-arms, must have rung with strange irony for the young Charles in his first appointment at the Calcutta court of British India.

"If you will have a little patience, the death of the Nizam [of Hyderabad] will probably enable me to gratify your voracious appetite for lands and fortresses," the new Marquess Wellesley wrote to his friend Henry Dundas, just after the Battle of Seringapatam and the fall of Mysore. "Seringapatam ought, I think, to stay in your stomach a while, not to mention Tanjore and the Poligar counties. Perhaps I may be able to give you a supper of Oudh and the Carnatic, if you should still be hungry."⁵ Wellesley wrote in confidence to remind Dundas and Pitt that he had kept his end of the imperial bargain struck by the three of them before his appointment: he would be fiercely active in acquiring new territories and their resources for Britain, and he would advance British prestige abroad even as he gathered riches to fund future wars of conquest. Gillray's cartoon of Pitt and Napoleon at table carving up the world's globe becomes in this context an apotheosis of the plan hatched by Pitt and Dundas and implemented by Wellesley and his brothers—to gratify their insatiable appetite for conquest, to preempt other nascent European empires, and to plumb the pudding of the world for Britain.

On 26 January 1803, Lord Valentia George Annesley, Pitt's chosen representative and observer arrived in British Calcutta, the place once called Kalikata that Job Charnock had occupied in 1690 for the English Company's trading station and commercial harbour soon to be built on the Sunderban marshlands along the Bay of Bengal. Valentia was on an official tour of British sites of interest—in and near India, but also of English outposts by the Red Sea, and along the coasts of Egypt and Abyssinia. Valentia's arrival coincided with the first "lighting" of New Government House for a Grand Ball celebrating the improbable Peace of Amiens signed with Napoleon. Wellesley's new seat of government, built at great expense, was a bright spectacle: outdoor torches and fireworks, and trumpeting elephants to greet the guests, pointed the way to the decorated ballroom, the Marble Dining Room set for 800 guests, and the Throne Room now outfitted with Tipu Sultan's platformed gold throne from Seringapatam Palace. Lord Valentia was underwhelmed. British Calcutta that night was fine, but not fine enough—and it was insufficiently

distinct from its Indian surroundings: "I wish India to be ruled from a palace, not a counting house; with the ideas of a Prince, not with those of a retail dealer in muslin and indigo."⁶

Charles D'Oyly, as one of the young aides in Wellesley's retinue, attended the Grand Ball. Assigned to serve in the logistics of Valentia's tour of Calcutta and its environs, he had ample opportunity to hear Valentia's opinions of what he saw: the "excellent British houses" built high above the river, and the New Government House matched the grandeur of the Court and Custom Houses, but the warehouses for goods and ledger-keeping (the original Writers' Buildings) were unacceptably tawdry, Robert Clive Street was dark and crowded, the Strand was too narrow to serve appropriately as a promenade, the Company garden and fish pond was a ridiculous apology for a botanical garden, and too many Calcutta thoroughfares matched the "dirty" streets of "Black Town" on Chitpore Road and its lines of "pagodas" that resembled "cabins of the poorest class in Ireland."⁷ D'Oyly's father, Sir John Hadley, arrived in Calcutta to join his son and celebrate his daughter Eliza's planned marriage to Walter Farquhar, a civil administrator in Bengal, the same year as Lord Valentia's tour of the city. Valentia's description did not match, or fit, the place Sir John remembered.

Flush from his successful acquisition of territories between 1803 and 1804, Wellesley took courage from Valentia's counsel of a royal capital for Britain in India. He ordered a frenzy of building—more Writers' Buildings, Fort William College, a new wing for Custom House, monumental thoroughfares (the Strand, Esplanade Row, "Great" Respondia) where there had once been functional streets, towering statues of British heroes of India for key structures and squares, an Anglican Cathedral to rival the old but "little structure" of the Presbyterian Church of St. Andrew, and, finally, a new Town Hall that would rival in grandeur and excess New Government House. There would be Palladian-style white palaces in town and grand summer mansions for every senior official in his administration. To accommodate plans for his own Summer Palace, Wellesley seized "Dum Dum," the Company's military cantonment and garden-house retreat in Barrackpore, northeast of Calcutta. The formal park for the Summer Palace was to include a theatre, riding house, aviary, menagerie—and a botanical garden assembled by the horticulturist Robert Kyd that would hold specimens of all the fruits of Britain's growing empire. British Calcutta would reflect in microcosm what Britain would become: it would be the flagship of her anticipated world power. Wellesley's Faustian ambition was to embank the Hooghly River itself from Fort William to the cantonments of Barrackpore and beyond, for a

man-made hill upon which *his* city of palaces could rise and stretch. The term "city of palaces" soon became a synecdoche for British Calcutta as first envisioned by Wellesley. "City of Palaces," a popular poem written in execrable verse for proud imperial generations, thenceforth channeled Wellesley's vision of British India's first city: British Calcutta was destined to be at the watery entrance of a blooming, British Hesperides, its buildings "towering peerlessly" with "dazzling splendours," "the pomp of spires / And palaces like magic . . . / All glittering in the sun-beams," etc.⁸ The opening canto of *Tom Raw, the Griffin* describes Wellesley's imagined city more succinctly: "The palaced city . . . [first seen by visitors, at a ship's distance from the Bay of Bengal, is] our delirium . . ." (I,57).

Cantos II and III of *Tom Raw* expand D'Oyly's metaphor of a Valentia-induced, self-reflecting delirium visible in the edifices of British Calcutta. New Government House, the centerpiece of Wellesley's "palaced city" is a seemingly "noble edifice": "the seat of government and Wellesley's pride, / Type of the brains that fill that noble head of his, / And the high horse he loved so well to ride" (II,7). Palladian-style, but built not of marble but of wood-covered Madras plaster that could be polished to a marble sheen, like the other "white palaces" of Britain's "Indian court," "Gov'ment House" was built by a "blind architect" who expressed as best he could the delirium of Wellesley's mind. The State Dining Room had floors of Chinese marble that reflected the rows of columns bearing the busts of the twelve Caesars. But the columns themselves were "deficient" in height and "dingy," like the "four dingy, miserable staircases" that served the purpose of a grand stairway, and the Throne Room was "furnished" with an elaborate mirrored chandelier acquired at auction from Colonel Claude Martin's pleasure palace in Lucknow. And the dome of the south wing that purportedly honoured the new Britain (in complement to the Company coat-of-arms on the roof of the north wing) was in fact, D'Oyly tells us, "a wood box" that "covers nought below! . . . [belatedly] perched up / To aid proportion, and for dumpiness t'tone [to atone]. / Nothing was ever so deformed or useless." The decoration for the dome's peak was to be a giant statue of "marble hero" Cornwallis commissioned from the sculptor John Bacon by Wellesley, but it proved to be too heavy for the flimsy structure; so, "A wooden figure of Minerva (some say Britannia)—an ill-wrought and clumsy figure," was erected in its stead (III,36,39-40,n.40). Dome, columns, and statues of gods all "gave way to the vile white ant" [termite] as did the other "classic style" decorative forms of "incongruous beasts" adorning Wellesley's buildings—"In this poor country, so devoid of stone . . . The gods and goddesses in wood must groan, rampant lions start from

forest logs" and "Egyptian sphinxes" rise from the [Sunderban] bogs." Over time, the white ants "ate them all, outright" (II,41;III,40).

Marquess Wellesley did not get to build all of the imperial structures he had planned, including his prized blueprint for a Town Hall that would match New Government House. In 1805 he was summoned home for excessive spending on structures and victory ceremonies, and for not always seeking prior approval for these from the Home Office. He was, as D'Oyly says, always one "For making ducks and drakes with public cash" (VIII,13). Severe financial hardship in England occasioned by military costs of the French wars left Pitt and his cohorts in London suddenly concerned about the optics of ostentation and expenditure abroad. Wellesley returned home, piqued that he had received only an Irish peerage for all his troubles; his brother, Arthur, went on to great fame in Europe against Napoleonic France. Wellesley, however, did set the pattern in India of showing imperial presence through imposing structures and grand ceremonies. The government of Lord Minto, who followed him (1807-13), was deliberately modest in expenditures and it shunned lavish official entertainments. But, with the Governor-Generalships of Francis Rawdon-Hastings (the 1st Marquess of Hastings, 1813-23), Lord William Amherst (1823-28) and Lord William Bentinck (1828-35), overt extravagance, edifice-building, and ceremonial pretention returned, to be coupled with an increasingly rigid social etiquette that defined and expressed what it was to be British in British Calcutta.

In 1805 Charles D'Oyly resigned from the civil service in Calcutta. He focused on his art, sketching scenes in the Bengal countryside, taking formal art lessons from George Chinnery (who became his lifelong friend and mentor), and joining Chinnery's circle of artists and students. In 1807, now married to his maternal cousin, Marian Greer (whose portrait Chinnery had painted in Dublin), D'Oyly sought to return to service in the government of Lord Minto. Minto, with a mandate from Parliament to counter Wellesley's extravagant reputation, was circumspect and frugal: he avoided military actions and refused to change those civil practices that still survived since Hastings' era in India, and his only building was a much diminished but needed Town Hall erected with monies from a private lottery. In *Tom Raw*, D'Oyly jokes about the meagre style of Town Hall built "Against the rules of architect'ral art" (IV,24) and those who bought lottery tickets to build it. Minto gave D'Oyly the post of revenue Collector in Dacca, 180 miles to the north of British Calcutta. The post of Collector at Dacca was not a choice assignment (these were occupied by Minto's friends), but it was providential: it provided time and, more importantly, vistas and distance for D'Oyly's art.⁹ Dacca had an unspoiled

countryside, ruins from seventeenth-century Hindu shrines, and a small European population that included a handful of English civil servants and peacekeepers who lived alongside the local villagers. The artist Chinnery, tired of painting portraits of the dignitaries of Calcutta, joined Charles and Marian and stayed with them in Dacca. D'Oyly sketched and painted scenes of rural life and picturesque overgrown ruins seen in the shadows at dusk in the manner of Chinnery's landscapes; he also executed graphical sketches of types and characters in British India that echoed the mischievous tones of Chinnery's formal but Hogarthian portraits of his British patrons. British residents of Calcutta in the period following Minto's governorship were required to have an official and residential appointment in the government. Beset by family tragedies and the illness of his wife, Charles returned to Calcutta in 1812, took one of the posts of Deputy Collector and, during the next three years, sought duties that sent him to city outskirts and provincial outposts in Bengal, even as he maintained his social and artistic contacts in the city. The deaths of his wife's two sisters in 1808-09, his sister Eliza Farquhar in 1813, his wife Marian in 1814, and his father in 1818, successively reduced D'Oyly's personal need to be in Calcutta. In 1818, Charles and his new wife, Elizabeth Jane Ross (also an artist in Chinnery's circle), moved to a home in the ancient city of Patna, Bihar, in the Rajmahal foothills. Patna was three hundred miles upriver and light years away from the politics and social strictures of British Calcutta.

The D'Oyly home in Patna became a magnet for independent and unorthodox artists without well-connected and wealthy patrons (including the now debt-ridden Chinnery); they were drawn by the D'Oyls' hospitality and free thinking (and, perhaps, the support of his recently inherited baronetcy). The group soon became a community of European and Indian artists, poets, writers, dramatists, political cartoonists, and print-makers, who collaborated on their creative work and shared democratic principles and a dissenting vision of British India. Members of this convivial group included Christopher Webb Smith, Jairam Das, Shiv Dayal, William and Mary Prinsep, James Young, and Mary Fendell. D'Oyly named his Patna circle, tongue-in-cheek, "The Behar Society of Athens" after Sir William Jones's original Asiatick Society. As self-styled outsiders from the Bengal establishment who often expressed a satiric perspective of British Calcutta, the Patna group resembled the Kalighat temple artists who had turned their devotional souvenir poster art into secular broadsides satirizing the British and their fawning local facilitators (called "Baboos") in the years following the British destruction of the Kali temple in center-city. The Kalighat artists had scattered to outskirts like Murshidabad in Bihar before

settling in 1809 at the replacement temple built by the British at Kalighat below Calcutta. Several of the members of D'Oyly's "Behar Society" were old survivors or children of English and Indian members of Warren Hastings' original circle; like D'Oyly, they were in Patna as exiles from Britain, Anglos more at home in an India not yet British than they would be in Britain. Their art was authentic, and *Anglo-Indian*, like themselves. The Patna group was creative, dynamic, collaborative, and politically charged. D'Oyly had placed himself as patron, finally, among friends who shared his values.

In 1823 D'Oyly purchased one of the newly-invented lithographic presses (one of only two in India; the other one belonged to the Government) so as to handily reproduce and disseminate the collaborative and politically-sensitive work of his friends. The model for the press was Horace Walpole's Strawberry Hill Press in England, founded for reproducing the work of Walpole's learned elite of outsider friends. D'Oyly's move to Patna in 1818 coincided with the start of protests by starving textile workers in Manchester over the bread shortage created by the Corn Laws of 1815 and the replacement of hand weaving and textile blocking with machines in factories. The Peterloo Massacre of the protesters in 1819 was followed by a nationwide crackdown on radical publishers, graphic artists, printers, and other suspect "humanitarians." The sometime brutal suppressions were soon extended to colonial cities like Calcutta, Madras, and Bombay, and to the dissenting cells on their outskirts. D'Oyly's founding of the Behar Lithographic Press was at once timely but not timely enough. The history of the press and D'Oyly's artistic circle has yet to be written. Only a few of their productions dating to D'Oyly's time in Patna have surfaced, and these are largely confined to multiple and non-attributed sources or to uncontroversial slapstick dramas, comic graphics, and illustrated collections of "Hindustani" birds, fauna, and "ceremonies."¹⁰

The years 1823-28, when D'Oyly was preparing *Tom Raw* for publication and supplementing his drawings for the poem, coincided with the Governor-Generalship of Lord William Amherst, who outdid his predecessor in instituting harsh and repressive civil laws for the local inhabitants of India, and in the formalities of behavior among the British who ruled them. Imperial appearance mattered most to Amherst: he moved from room to room in Government House preceded by twelve Indian subedars bearing silver maces; his arrival and departure from Government House entailed a procession of British honour guards on horseback in full dress uniforms, and three splendid carriages for his official party; and, when he rode out on horseback with his family, he insisted that Lady

Amherst's mount not advance beyond his own horse's hindquarters. Lord William Bentinck, who followed Amherst as Governor-General (1828-35), made efforts to reduce the appearance of ostentation and overt might by limiting elaborate public ceremonies and extravagant formal wear by British officials and their wives. His wife, Lady Bentinck, went one step further: she forbade the wearing of feathers, glittering accessories and "Indian fabrics" lest the otherwise British ladies be mistaken for "nautch girls"; she also uprooted the flowers and tropical plantings around Government House and replaced these with dry sand lest the exotic flora harbour miasmas from the Sunderbans.¹¹

D'Oyly would have heard from friends in the Patna circle, like the Prinsep brothers, of the many changes, large and small, emanating from British Calcutta in the years 1825-35. There is no evidence that D'Oyly composed and illustrated anything in the manner of *Tom Raw* after the poem's completion. Perhaps the prospects for satiric laughter at Britain's India had grown too serious, and, to a once *inside outsider* in exile, such laughter now bore complicity—and had to be disavowed completely. Ten years after the suppression of *Tom Raw, the Griffin*, and perhaps in protest of the imminent First Opium War and the propaganda drumbeat leading up to it, the now ailing D'Oyly left India for Italy in 1838 where he joined other British expatriates outside Florence. He continued working on his last drawings of India and on the oil paintings taken from these until he died in 1845. His brother William inherited the baronetcy and, in 1869, one hundred years after Sir John first arrived in India as a Company Writer, William D'Oyly's son (named after his grandfather's friend) inherited the title as Sir Warren Hastings D'Oyly. Buried at the Anglican Cemetery in Leghorn, Italy, Charles D'Oyly joined other English artists who found final rest either there or at the Protestant Cemetery in Rome.

In contemporary art history D'Oyly finds mention as an artist of generic landscapes and cityscapes of India, and of light and amusing graphics on the postures of British "Nabobs." The substance of his considerable body of work is fully outside the ken of literary study and art history of the Romantic era (1790-1836). Histories of the founding of the British Empire, whether patriotic or critical, make no mention of D'Oyly and his prescient vision of Britain in India. The opening cantos of *Tom Raw, the Griffin*, with their scathing ridicule of Wellesley's grandiose and tawdry splendour and their outrage at Wellesley's uncivil waste of resources and people, make clear how influential—and powerfully negative—Charles's youthful experience was of Wellesley's government and the British Calcutta he had built. All of D'Oyly's artistic work can and

should be seen as a response to what he saw and did not like while he was first a civil servant in India between 1798 and 1805, and as an outsider's effort to define his own values and perspectives *against* the prevailing British norms and ambitions. His very early pencil and watercolor sketches (later engraved by John Landseer and published in 1814-17, as *Antiquities of Dacca* and in an expanded version in 1830 as *Sketches of a Journey from Calcutta to Gyah* by his own Behar Press) depict not picturesque "pagodas" "grotesque," temples and other conventional "sights" sought by imperial tourists and armchair travelers in England but elegiac vignettes of small villages, bathing pools and country shrines nestled along the old road to Dacca. Finished coloured drawings and a few surviving oil paintings of the Calcutta area that were completed by D'Oyly in the 1830s before he left India were subsequently engraved by George Francis White and published *anonymously* in 1848 as *Views of Calcutta and Its Environs*. D'Oyly's last "views" of the city in this collection stand as a complex disavowal of familiar imperial scenes—of British Calcutta buildings, of monuments to military heroes, and of the palatial villas of Garden Reach—that were the favoured subjects of imperial painters like William Daniell and James Baillie Fraser. *Views of Calcutta and Its Environs* has been described and judged as amateur, "startling" and "lacking" in topographical perspective.¹² In fact, D'Oyly's scenes are deliberately angulated and implicitly ironic; they are compressed, wistful, nostalgic scenes of a city's long past, mostly erased but present in fragments. What is not shown, or shown obliquely, is often the point. D'Oyly pictures Calcutta from a distance—or from an imaginary place outside or above the city—as an active multi-racial Indian town in the foreground of later British structures: the wharf and port of Calcutta bustle with energetic living figures and other signs of active trading that dwarf the pillared white buildings in the background; the Esplanade Row of British government buildings and its segregating Maidan and Tank is shown only as a distant spectacle to the lively scene on Chowringee Road; Clive Street, an early and key imperial artery to British Calcutta is seen from a perspective that is far too close—one that reveals the decaying plaster surfaces of the Palladian structure.



Figure 2. Charles D'Oyly, *Ochterlony Monument*, c. 1835. [*View of Calcutta and its Environs*, plate 25, 1848].

D'Oyly's last scenes of Calcutta are elegiac, environmental, partly imaginary, and ironic. Plate 26 of his *Views of Calcutta and Its Environs* [Fig. 2], is an aerial view from a point above and behind Esplanade Row, across several horizontal planes of the Chowrangee Road, Dhurrantollah Tank or reflecting pond, and the Maidan. The focus of the painting, in the right middle ground, is on the columned monument to Sir David Ochterlony, a friend of the D'Oyly and Hastings families, who had chosen exile in Meerut, above Calcutta, after he was ostracized for having become an "old Indian." The monument stands tall and alone, far from the white palaces on the left, and from the bustle of Esplanade Row. Ochterlony had been a Company hero in earlier times: well-known and well-liked, he had been decorated, titled, and appointed ambassador to the Moghul Court in Delhi. Ochterlony married several high-born Indian women and adopted local customs in his establishment in Delhi. In his heyday, he was legendary for his evening ride on horseback around the Red Fort—accompanied by his thirteen wives, each on her own elephant. D'Oyly's ironic homage to Ochterlony is quiet and rueful. Erected in the 1828 well after Ochterlony's death in exile, the monument was a political act by the Amherst government of denial (of the life) and rehabilitation (of the record) of Sir David and the Hastings era in India. *Suspension Bridge at Alipore over Tolly's Nullah*, plate 20 in *Views of Calcutta and Its Environs*, is at once distant from the British city-centre, personal, and elegiac. Delicately drawn, it shows Bengali villagers at work and play—transporting passengers on a budgerow, fishing and bathing in the river, and crossing the elegant suspension bridge stretching over the river inlet

between the city embankment and Alipore. [Fig. 3] The view of the bridge is seen from a place on the riverbank by Warren and Marian Hastings' home where D'Oyly had once played as a very young child.



Figure 3. Charles D'Oyly, *Suspension Bridge at Alipore over Tolly's Nullah*, c. 1835. [*Views of Calcutta and its Environs*, plate 20, 1848.]

In Canto VIII of *Tom Raw* we find D'Oyly's young cadet sitting in a budgerow on the Hoogly River waiting impatiently for high tide so that the flat-bottomed boat can move from Garden Reach toward the northwest outpost above Patna where he will begin his "military adventures." Tom's boat drifts slowly upriver, past what remains of the Hastings' house at Alipore, past Danish Serampore where the exiles from British Calcutta (like Chinnery) lived, past the English cantonment at Burhampore, and then, finally, the palace of the Nawab of Bengal built high above the river near Murshidabad in the Rajmahal hills—where D'Oyly's father had worked and lived with his family until 1785. [Fig. 4] Childhood memories of Hasting's Alipore on "fair Hoogly's stream" and of "the blue hills / Of fair Rajemahal" seen from his first home near Murshidabad, prompt D'Oyly to break from his satiric stance and declare with fond earnestness:

T'was here, . . . Hastings spent
His happiest Indian days, amidst the smiles

Of wedded love and infant blandishment,
And friendship that made light his anxious toils;
Happier in dealing justice than in spoils
Of conquered nations—he dispensed around
Blessings unnumbered, hushed dissension's broils,
And o'er oppression those fell fetters wound,
That had, for ages past, her wretched victims bound.

Fond memory—while it gives his virtues back,
Gives, too, a pang that his career is o'er,
Like a bright comet, whose celestial track,
Is looked for with delight, though seen no more,
Leaving its absent brightness to deplore. (VIII,12-15)

Recollections of Alipore and of the great banyan tree on the river's edge below Hastings' home where he had once played, of the place where he had stayed briefly with his father and sisters upon his eager return to India in 1797, may well have led Charles D'Oyly to believe that place embodied his own "happiest Indian days" as well. [Fig. 4]



Figure 4. William Hodges, *Natives Drawing Water from a Pond [by the River Hoogly]. With Warren Hastings' House at Alipore in the Distance*, 1781.



Figure 5. William Hodges, *Mrs. Hastings Near the Rocks of Colgong*, 1790.

In the summer of 1782 Marian Hastings had a near-fatal accident when, traveling to Calcutta to visit Warren, the budgerow she was on capsized during a storm into the rapids of Colgong. William Hodges painted the scene of Mrs. Hastings' boat amid swirling waters and high rocks, and the painting hung in the Hastings' country home at Daylesford. **[Fig. 5]** D'Oyly, on his return to India, and then again when he left British Calcutta on the way to Patna, painted the Colgong Rocks—as does Tom Raw when he is on his boat trip upriver to meet Colonel Kyan and assume his military post (VIII,46-54). Memories of the beauty and terror at Colgong lead D'Oyly, in Cantos IX and X, to depict Tom, cast from his boat into the rapids along with the Manchester trunk filled with all his worldly goods brought from home, and later saved from drowning by an empty lota (water pot) that Tom clutches until he lands on the shore of Bar near Patna (X,1-11 and note 11). Shipwrecked, hungry and in tattered clothes like Odysseus, Tom's mythic and real immersion is one of incomprehension: he cannot communicate with the hill-country peasants who find him because he does not know their language—and they cannot understand his few words of pidgin “Anglicè.” He is almost killed as an alien until he resorts to imperious sounds of bombastic “griffin jargon,” in urgent mimicry of the hollow men of British Calcutta who have sent him